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MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES

1998-1999 Business plan


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MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

It is my pleasure to announce the release of the Ministry of Natural Resources' 1998-1999 Business Plan. This plan outlines the government's commitment to sustainable resource management and the protection of our natural heritage. It details the strategies and programs that will be implemented over the next year to ensure the long-term health and productivity of our natural resources.

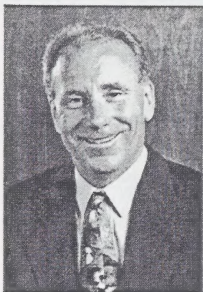
MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES

1998-1999 Business Plan



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**Hon. John C.
Snobelen**

MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

Ontario's wealth of natural resources contribute to the quality of life in the province in many ways. They provide us with an abundance of secure jobs, recreational opportunities, and healthy, stable communities. The Ministry of Natural Resources, as the steward of this legacy of resources, plays a leadership role on behalf of all Ontarians, in ensuring the continued availability of these resources into the next century.

The Lands for Life planning process, launched in 1997, is allowing the public to take part in making decisions on land and resource uses. The decisions about the sustainable use of natural resources made under this initiative will result in greater certainty for those who depend on natural resources for their livelihood, improvements in our system of parks and protected areas, and will lead to growth, job creation, and a healthier Ontario economy.

The ministry is undertaking significant initiatives to improve public safety. Forest fires are a yearly concern in Ontario. In the last five years, the province's forest fires have burned an average of 259,700 hectares per year. To address this concern, MNR is acquiring nine new CL-415 waterbombers, the most advanced waterbomber in the world, to improve forest firefighting and increase protection of Northern communities and industries.

MNR also introduced comprehensive fish and wildlife legislation, the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, which was passed by the Legislature. The ministry is now working on the associated regulations. The Act provides an important tool for Ontario's efforts in conservation and management of the province's valuable natural resources. Among other things, it protects and manages a broader range of species, improves client services and toughens enforcement provisions.

MNR is making good progress in adapting to new approaches to resource management while firmly maintaining its commitment to resource sustainability. The ministry is working to ensure that our precious resources are available for the use and enjoyment of ourselves and our children.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to John C. Snobelen.

The Honourable John C. Snobelen
Minister of Natural Resources

MINISTRY VISION

The vision of the Ministry of Natural Resources is to achieve sustainable development of the province's natural resources, including the economies and communities that depend on them.

Our natural resources need to be managed in ways that ensure they are available for the enjoyment and use of future generations. MNR is committed to conserving the province's natural resources and increasing those resources, where possible.

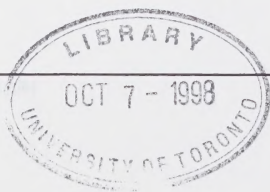
The ministry will achieve its mandate by:

- Ensuring the long-term health of natural resources by protecting and conserving our valuable soil, fish, forests and wildlife resources.
- Ensuring the continuing availability of natural resources for the long-term benefit of the people of Ontario.
- Providing for the sustainable use and development of Ontario's Crown land and waters.
- Protecting natural areas and biological features of provincial significance.
- Providing for a wide range of outdoor recreational opportunities.
- Protecting human life, natural resources, and property from forest fires, floods and erosion.
- Ensuring that geographic and resource information is available.

MNR is the lead Ontario agency for ensuring the protection and sustainable development of the province's natural resources. The ministry plays a key role in integrating various uses of Ontario's natural resources.

The ministry has approximately 3,200 full-time staff located in 25 district offices, area offices, research facilities, fish culture stations, three regional offices, and three main office locations (Peterborough, Toronto, and Sault Ste. Marie). MNR's seasonal workforce peaks in the summer months at around 2,800 jobs and operates fire attack bases, provincial parks and ranger camps.

The ministry continues to be highly decentralized with a strong emphasis on "front-line" delivery and service. MNR retains a strong presence in many communities, especially in rural and Northern Ontario.



ANNUAL REPORT ON KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND COMMITMENTS

1997-98 Achievements

The ministry made great strides in achieving the commitments made in its 1997-98 Business Plan.

MNR introduced comprehensive fish and wildlife legislation. The *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act* was passed by the Legislature and, when proclaimed, will result in a streamlined legislative framework which is easier to understand. Fish stocking was increased to 7.8 million fish, exceeding the ministry's goal by 300,000. The ministry supported a total of 465 Community Fish and Wildlife Involvement Projects, and reintroduced elk into Ontario. In addition, new business relationships were established with the commercial fishing and fur industries.

The ministry successfully negotiated new Sustainable Forest Licences bringing the total for all Forest Management Units up to 91 per cent. It also fulfilled the commitments from last year's plan related to forest policy and technical committees, and issued the first annual report on forest management. As well, a total of 10 independent forest audits were completed to provide assurance that forests are being managed according to approved plans and that licence conditions are being met.

The ministry launched Lands for Life, a comprehensive land use planning initiative which will help complete Ontario's protected areas system, as well as identify land for use by tourism and forestry operations. Good progress has been made and the round tables have met with many people across the province.

As well, the ministry formally established 17 additional parks and protected areas as part of Lands for Life. An area of 700,000 hectares was added to Wabakimi Provincial Park as called for in last year's plan. In addition, the ministry launched the Parks Visual Identity Program, established the Ontario Parks Advisory Board, and conducted a major marketing survey. Parks visits increased by 300,000 to 8.3 million.

The ministry met its commitment to maintain fire protection and safety standards. The forest area burned was restricted to 34,000 hectares in the commercial forest zone. As well, the ministry negotiated an agreement to replace its aging waterbomber fleet with new, state-of-the-art aircraft.

In early January, 175 MNR personnel worked as part of the eastern Ontario emergency ice storm relief efforts. Staff cleared downed trees to help Hydro crews access power lines, set up water pumps to prevent basements from flooding, operated satellite communications units for communities without telephone service and distributed generators to remote farms and homes. MNR helicopters provided support in various locations, and the MNR Emergency Response Centre in Sault Ste. Marie worked with Emergency Measures Ontario to co-ordinate MNR's significant relief effort.

MNR made good progress in meeting its commitments to geographic information. Base map coverage of the area south of 51°N has been completed (51 degrees North is a line of latitude that runs approximately from Red Lake in northwestern Ontario to Moose River in northeastern Ontario). As well, the updated Forest Resources Inventory has been 79 per cent completed.

New business relationships were established with the petroleum and mineral aggregate industries. These included the establishment of the Ontario Aggregate Resources Trust and the Ontario Oil, Gas and Salt Resources Trust.

The ministry completed its first general customer satisfaction survey. Eighty per cent of customers felt that MNR met their expectations. As well, MNR attained a 95 per cent public compliance rate with resource laws or regulations, exceeding its target of 90 per cent, based on ministry officer contacts.

1998-99 Commitments

The ministry is working to ensure that the province's natural resource base is sustained. Information on the area of productive Crown forest is an important indicator of how MNR is doing at sustaining the resource. The new Forest Information Manual will legally require the provision of more current and precise resource information annually. The ministry will also continue to provide the Annual Report on Forest Management. In addition, MNR put in place a system to assess and report on renewal efforts and will continue to report the results from independent forest audits.

Ontario's abundant fish and wildlife resources must also be sustained. As announced in the 1998 Budget, \$10 million in special funding will be provided over three years for fish and wildlife protection and enhancement to improve the province's management of these resources. The regulations for the new Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act will be prepared. As well, MNR will establish a Big Game Information Management System to provide for more consistent, timely and accurate management information about the health and abundance of moose, deer and black bear.

With numerous lakes and rivers across the province, Ontario has abundant and varied fisheries resources. MNR will increase its commitment to the number of fish stocked in provincial waterways to 8.5 million in 1998-99.

The ministry will also emphasize marketing efforts to increase awareness of opportunities for fishing, hunting and park visitation in 1998-99. As well, the ministry will work to increase the number of visitors in under-used parks.

MNR will continue its work on behalf of endangered species. The ministry will regulate two additional species in 1998-99, the Prothonotary warbler and the king rail, both bird species, for a total of 26 species protected by law. As well, two additional recovery plans will be prepared, for a total of 16 plans.

The ministry remains committed to protecting representative natural areas. Phase one of the Lands for Life initiative will be completed in 1998-99. As a result, additional areas will be identified for regulation as provincial parks and conservation reserves. In addition, the 1998 Budget committed \$20 million in funding over four years to Natural Areas Protection in order to protect important natural heritage sites and environmentally sensitive lands.

Customer service remains a high priority. MNR has implemented standard office hours in all district offices. The ministry will undertake a customer satisfaction survey of organizations with which it is involved in commercially based services and transactions to establish a more specific satisfaction baseline for industry clients.

MNR also remains committed to protecting human life, property and natural resources. The ministry's fire response time will be kept to within 60 minutes in the intensive fire management zone.

Geographic information is a provincially significant strategic resource. The ministry will initiate base mapping for the area north of 51°N. In 1998-99, the updated Forest Resources Inventory will be 85 per cent completed, and phase one of the Digital Natural Resources Values and Information System will be completed.

CORE BUSINESSES FOR 1998/99

For 1998-1999, there was a minor realignment of the ministry's core businesses to better focus decision-making and priority-setting. The following are the ministry's core businesses:

Natural Resource Management

This core business ensures Ontario's forest, fish, wildlife, Crown lands and waters, provincial parks and protected areas, and soil resources are managed sustainably to provide environmental, social and economic benefits. Sustainable development recognizes and supports the needs of society, consistent with the capacity of the natural environment. The programs within the core business of Natural Resource Management strive to achieve a balance between use and protection, to ensure the recognition of a broad range of values, and to develop mechanisms for open decision-making and program delivery.

Public Safety and Emergency Response

This core business ensures the protection of life, property and natural resources from the natural disasters of forest fires, floods and erosion. This core business focuses on the provision of timely information about fire and flood emergencies, planning the most effective and efficient means of dealing with them and ensuring there is an adequate capability on-the-ground to provide protection for people and property, community and public infrastructure, and the natural resources. This business area delivers the ministry's Aviation, Flood and Fire Management program, comprised of emergency planning, flood forecasting, forest fire management and aviation services.

Geographic Information

This core business provides for the creation, maintenance of, and access to geographic information about provincial lands, waters, natural resources and infrastructure. Geographic information is a provincially significant strategic resource - a critical element to the building of an information-based society in Ontario. It is a fundamental requirement of nearly all of MNR's business activities and is in great demand by Ontario government ministries and industry, such as land development, natural resources, utilities, transportation, public health and safety, education, agriculture, land administration, and commerce, as well as being the basis for private sector value-added products and services.

KEY STRATEGIES

The strategies set out in MNR's 1998-99 Business Plan continue the ministry along paths of change initiated in our previous two business plans.

Use of Partnerships

Land Information Ontario, a corporate restructuring project being led by MNR, will rely heavily on the identification of partnerships and other alternative service delivery models for the collection, management and distribution of land information and value-added products and services, including the negotiation of an Ontario Parcel Partnership with key stakeholders. The ministry will also develop a new business relationship with the bait-fish industry.

Customer Service

Improved and consistent district office hours of operation will be implemented across the province. The establishment of MNR On-Line will improve access to MNR information through Internet and Intranet development. Implementing other modern communications technology such as Phone-net will also help improve customer access.

A baseline satisfaction rating of ministry service will be established through surveys of commercial users of resources. As well, planned stakeholder forums for the fire management program will work toward improving customer involvement in program planning.

Ontario Parks will continue to improve its program, diversifying park facilities to make park visitation accessible to more of the public.

Use of Technology

MNR will establish the Natural Resource Values and Information System, a natural resource data infrastructure system. The ministry will also fully implement the Geographic Information System infrastructure across MNR. It will also complete the conversion of its heavy water bombing fleet to state-of-the-art aircraft.

Youth Employment

Beginning in 1998-99, the ministry will be implementing a four-tier youth employment program to create opportunities that support careers in resource management, rebuild skills in MNR, provide meaningful job opportunities for youth, support ministry core businesses and promote opportunities for revitalization of the Ontario Public Service (OPS).

A Fair Return To Taxpayers

These strategies will involve obtaining a fair return for resources and services based on their appropriate value and making programs more fiscally self-sufficient. Much of the revenue will be invested in natural resource conservation and service improvements. Reinvestment, offset by revenue increases, will enable the ministry to proactively position itself to improve land management business practices and partnership development and marketing strategies.

Efficiency Measures

Implementation of a total cost management approach to funding in the Aviation, Fire and Flood Management program will allow the program to realize significant savings. Up-front investment in “preparedness” and information/technology applications will result in an average annual net reduction in the total cost of fire management to the government of \$2 million annually.

1998-99 Corporate Priorities

The successful implementation of our key strategies will allow the ministry to deliver on its 1998-99 corporate priorities:

- enhancing the fish and wildlife program, including implementation of the new Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act;
- improving customer service and developing a marketing strategy for natural resource opportunities;
- Crown land use planning through Lands for Life and North of 51°N;
- rejuvenating and reskilling the MNR workforce consistent with its new roles and responsibilities; and
- supporting OPS restructuring and service improvement initiatives at the ministry and regional levels.

KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Core Business: Natural Resource Management			
Goals/Outcomes	Measures	Targets/Standards	98-99 Commitments
Natural resource base is sustained.	Area of productive Crown forests.	This is a new measure.* New measure is based on the three year rolling average number of hectares of productive Crown forest land. 97/98 baseline is 39 million ha.	Regulate the Forest Information Manual to require more current and precise resource information. Track and report this information annually. Identify, explain and report on major additions and depletions to the area.
	Harvest area successfully renewed.	This is a new measure.* New measure is based on the "percentage of harvested area successfully renewed." The benchmark of 96 per cent, is taken from the Ontario Independent Audit of forest renewal, 1992.	Identify, explain and report on major variations in success rates. Improve assessment and reporting of this measure. Continue to report results from independent audits. The audit protocol will be adjusted to capture this measure. Continue production and completion of silviculture guides. Regulate the Forest Information Manual to require more current and precise resource information.

* This new measure replaces the 97/98 measure (health and abundance of forested land) as more quantifiable and specific to the outcome.

Core Business: Natural Resource Management

Goals/Outcomes	Measures	Targets/Standards	98-99 Commitments
	Health and abundance of moose population.	This is a new measure.* New measure is based on the estimated number of moose in the province. The provincial target, based on MNR's scientific information, is a population of 160,000 animals (long term).	The ministry will establish a Big Game Information Management System. Conduct aerial surveys and review provincial targets with Big Game Committee. Establish an improved system of assessment to provide for more consistent, timely, and accurate management information. Implement a more efficient regulation process for moose.
	Health and abundance of deer population.	This is a new measure.* New measure is based on the estimated number of deer in the province. The provincial target, based on MNR's scientific information, is a population of 325,000 animals.	An improved system of assessment to provide for more consistent, timely, and accurate management information. The ministry will establish a Big Game Information Management System. Review provincial deer management policy. Implement a more efficient regulation process for deer.
	Health and abundance of black bear population.	This is a new measure.* New measure based on the estimated number of bear in the province. The emphasis is on maintaining current, stable populations which, based on MNR's scientific information, are estimated to be 75,000 animals.	Implement legislative and regulatory changes to improve bear management and enforcement. An improved system of assessment to provide for more consistent, timely, and accurate management information. Establish a Big Game Information Management System. Implement a more efficient regulation process for bear.
	Rate of compliance with resource laws and regulations.	Standard is 90% compliance based on ministry officer contacts.	Standard is met across all programs.

* This new measure replaces the 97/98 measure (health and abundance of wildlife and fisheries stock) as more quantifiable and specific.

Core Business: Natural Resource Management

Goals/Outcomes	Measures	Targets/Standards	98-99 Commitments
	Endangered species protected.	This is a new measure.* New measure based on the number of species regulated as "endangered" in Ontario, under the Endangered Species Act. The standard for this measure will be to ensure that all species identified as endangered are protected by regulation, under the Act.	Two additional species regulated, to a total of 26 species protected by regulation. Two additional recovery plans prepared, to a total of 16 recovery plans.
	Representative natural areas protected.	To complete a system of parks and protected areas.	Phase one of the Lands for Life initiative will be completed in 1998/99. As a result, it is expected that additional areas will be regulated as provincial parks or conservation reserves.
	Number of fish stocked.	This is a new measure.* The object will be to establish this new measure as based on the total number of fish stocked in the provincial waterways. 97/98 baseline is 7.8 million.	8.5 million fish stocked.

* This new measure replaces the 97/98 measure (health and abundance of wildlife and fisheries stock) as more quantifiable and specific.

Core Business: Natural Resource Management

Goals/Outcomes	Measures	Targets/Standards	98-99 Commitments
Economic and social benefits from Ontario's natural resources are sustained.	Level of recreational use of natural resources. A "user day" is calculated as one person on any given day doing an identified activity.	Measure will report the estimated level of participation in the separate areas of fish and wildlife related activities, and the level of use of provincial parks. Baseline for this season is set at: (Residents) wildlife viewing - 29.0 million user days hunting - 5.6 million user days fishing - 25.0 million user days (Non-Residents) hunting - 150,000 user days fishing - 4.0 million user days (Provincial Parks) parks visits-7.7 million (10 yr.avg.)	Business plans emphasize aggressive marketing efforts to increase awareness of opportunities and encourage higher participation levels. Raise standard for provincial parks visits to 8.1 million (10-year average).
All ministry activities emphasize need to ensure high levels of customer satisfaction.	Level of customer satisfaction (a combined survey of general public users and commercial/program clients). This is new measure replaces three previous measures (level of satisfaction, level of public satisfaction with public involvement in decision-making, and level of meaningful opportunities for involvement in decision-making). The replacement is based on a more scientific method and is expected to yield more useful information.	Measure will report on the percentage of general public and ministry clients either satisfied or very satisfied with the level and quality of service provided by MNR. The ministry will strive to establish and maintain a standard of at least 80 per cent satisfaction.	To undertake a survey of organizations with which the ministry is involved in commercially-based services and transactions. Purpose will be to establish a more specific satisfaction baseline for industry clients. Implement strategy and plans to improve the level of service to both general public and ministry clients.

Core Business: Public Safety and Emergency Response

Goals/Outcomes	Measures	Targets/Standards	98-99 Commitments
Human life, property, and natural resources are protected.	Fire response time. Previously, the measure covered only the time between reporting of the fire and the departure of crews. The more meaningful standard of 60 minutes covers the time between reporting of the fire and the start of actual suppression activity on site.	This is an existing measure for which the benchmark has been adjusted to reflect the actual time required from when a fire is reported to when suppression activity is initiated. A standard of 60 minutes response time in the intensive fire management zone.	65 per cent of fires actioned within the standard.

Core Business: Geographic Information

Goals/Outcomes	Measures	Targets/Standards	98-99 Commitments
Economic and social benefits from Ontario natural resources are sustained.	Percentage of the province with current resource inventory and base maps.	This is an existing measure that has been adjusted to include another previously reported (percentage of the province placed into forest resources inventory). This measure reports on progress to achieve completion of: Ontario base map coverage, Forest Resources Inventory, and Digital Natural Resources Values and Information System.	Initiate base mapping for the area north of 51° N. Forest Resources Inventory 85% complete. Digital Natural Resources Values and Information System - Phase 1 complete.

1997-98 MINISTRY SPENDING BY CORE BUSINESS – INTERIM ACTUALS

Ministry of Natural Resources

Operating	\$ 429.2 Million
Capital	\$ 151.3 Million
	3,455 Staff

Natural Resource Management

Operating	\$ 179.7 Million
Capital	\$ 2.5 Million
	1,657 Staff

Forest Management
Fish & Wildlife Management

Crown Land Management

Operating	\$ 64.0 Million
Capital	\$ 7.1 Million
	468 Staff

Crown Land Management

Public Safety and Enforcement

Operating	\$ 97.9 Million
Capital	\$ 131.7 Million
	320 Staff

Aviation, Flood & Fire
Management

Parks and Protected Areas

Operating	\$ 45.2 Million
Capital	\$ 10.0 Million
	442 Staff

Parks & Protected Areas

Admin. and Main Office

Operating	\$ 26.6 Million
Capital	-
	341 Staff

Geographic Information

Operating	\$ 15.8 Million
Capital	-
	227 Staff

Natural Resource Information
Provincial Land Information

1998-99 MINISTRY APPROVED ALLOCATIONS BY CORE BUSINESS – PLAN

Ministry of Natural Resources

Operating	\$ 388.2 Million
Capital	\$ 29.1 Million
	3,180 Staff

Natural Resource Management

Operating	\$ 273.5 Million
Capital	\$ 25.5 Million
	2,201 Staff

Forest Management
Fish & Wildlife Management
Crown Land Management
Parks & Protected Areas

Public Safety and Emergency Response

Operating	\$ 70.1 Million
Capital	\$ 3.6 Million
	441 Staff

Aviation, Flood & Fire
Management

Geographic Information

Operating	\$ 18.5 Million
Capital	-
	215 Staff

Natural Resource Information
Provincial Land Information

Admin. and Main Office

Operating	\$ 26.1 Million
Capital	-
	323 Staff

WHO TO CALL

Questions or comments about the ministry's business plan are welcomed. Further information about the ministry and its programs can be found on our website at www.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR/.

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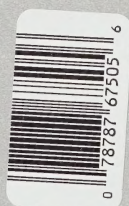
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